Native Americans

In

Livingston County

By

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Fairbury Echoes Museum
Livingston County Historical Society

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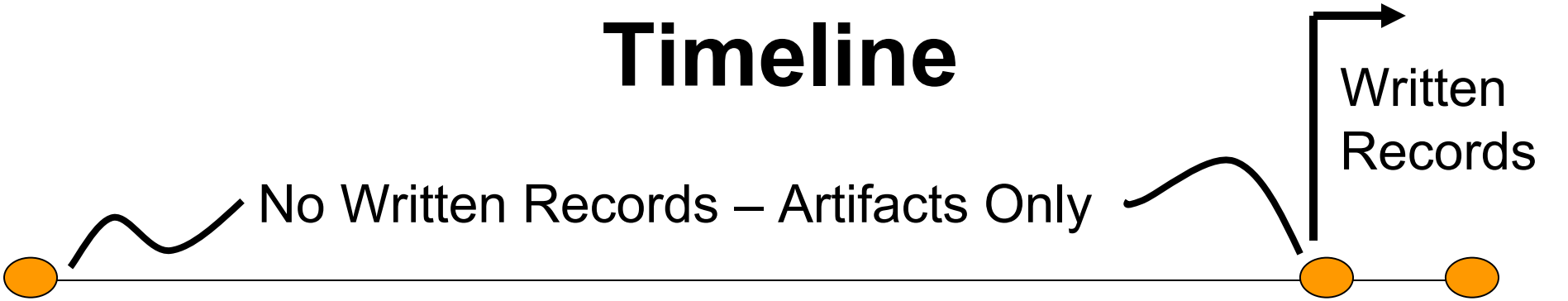
Timeline

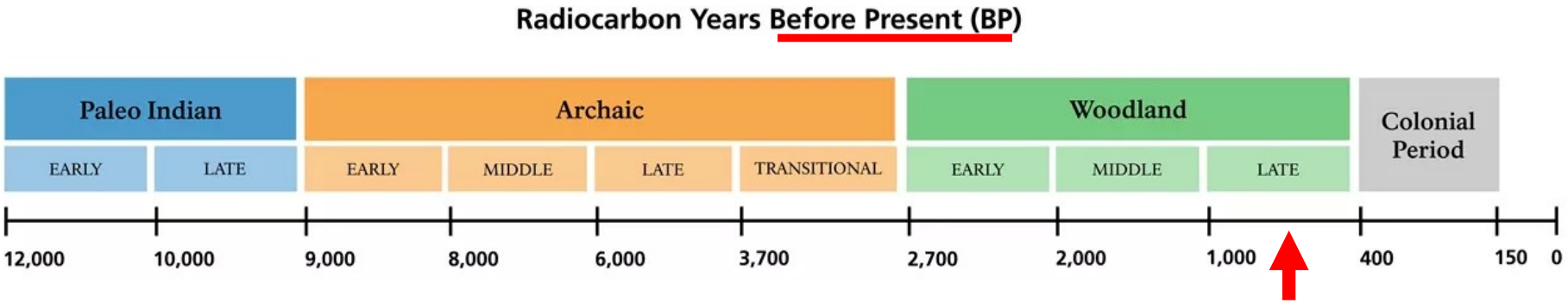


- 10,000 to 20,000 BC
- Glaciers melt
- Humans cross over land bridge from Asia to Alaska
- Humans start to populate North & South America

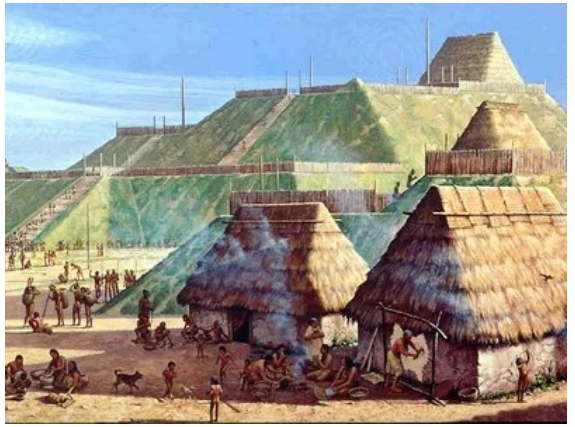
~12,000 Years
30 Year Life Span
= 400 Generations!!

- 1673
- Marquette and Jolliet are 1st Europeans to Visit Illinois

Timeline



- Experts in Native America artifacts can identify which Period they were made
- Would take another whole presentation to explain these characteristics!
- Experts predict still 1 Billion artifacts waiting to be found in North America !!



Cahokia Mounds
700-1350 AD

Woodland Period Burial

- In May of 1948, a male skeleton was found buried near the intersection of the South Branch of the Vermilion River (Indian Creek) and the Main branch of the Vermilion
- Artifacts found in the grave indicated the man was buried during the Woodland Period (500 to 1500 AD)
  - -Bones and artifacts about 1,000 years old

Woodland Period Burial

- Edgar Zook at dig site in May of 1948
- 6 miles north of Fairbury
- Pantagraph Negative Project

Woodland Period Burial

- On the right arm of the skeleton was a crude, leaf shaped arrow of quartzite and the middle part of a flat drill, and beneath the skeleton was found a five-inch, split-bone awl.

- The awl was sharp and highly polished from much use.

- Tooth marks on the awl indicated that it had been gnawed upon by rodents.

Woodland Period Burial

•Spades, mattocks, and shovels were laid aside, and the delicate work of uncovering the burial without damage to its position was undertaken with trowels, whiskbrooms and spatulas.

•Careful measurements were made, pictures taken, and many other details recorded, all of which will be sent to Dr. John C. McGregor, chief archaeologist of the Illinois State Museum in Springfield.

Woodland Period Burial

- The burial was carefully removed, and the bones will be cleaned, treated with a special preservative, and later rejoined.

- It is planned to send the skull to the Illinois State Museum, where Bartlett Frost, dioramist, has perfected a system of reconstructing Indian heads over the skulls recovered from archaeological sites.

- These reconstructions are rather accurate likenesses of the former living originals.

Dioramas at Illinois State Museum

Native Americans in Livingston County

Native Americans in Livingston County

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Native Americans in Livingston County

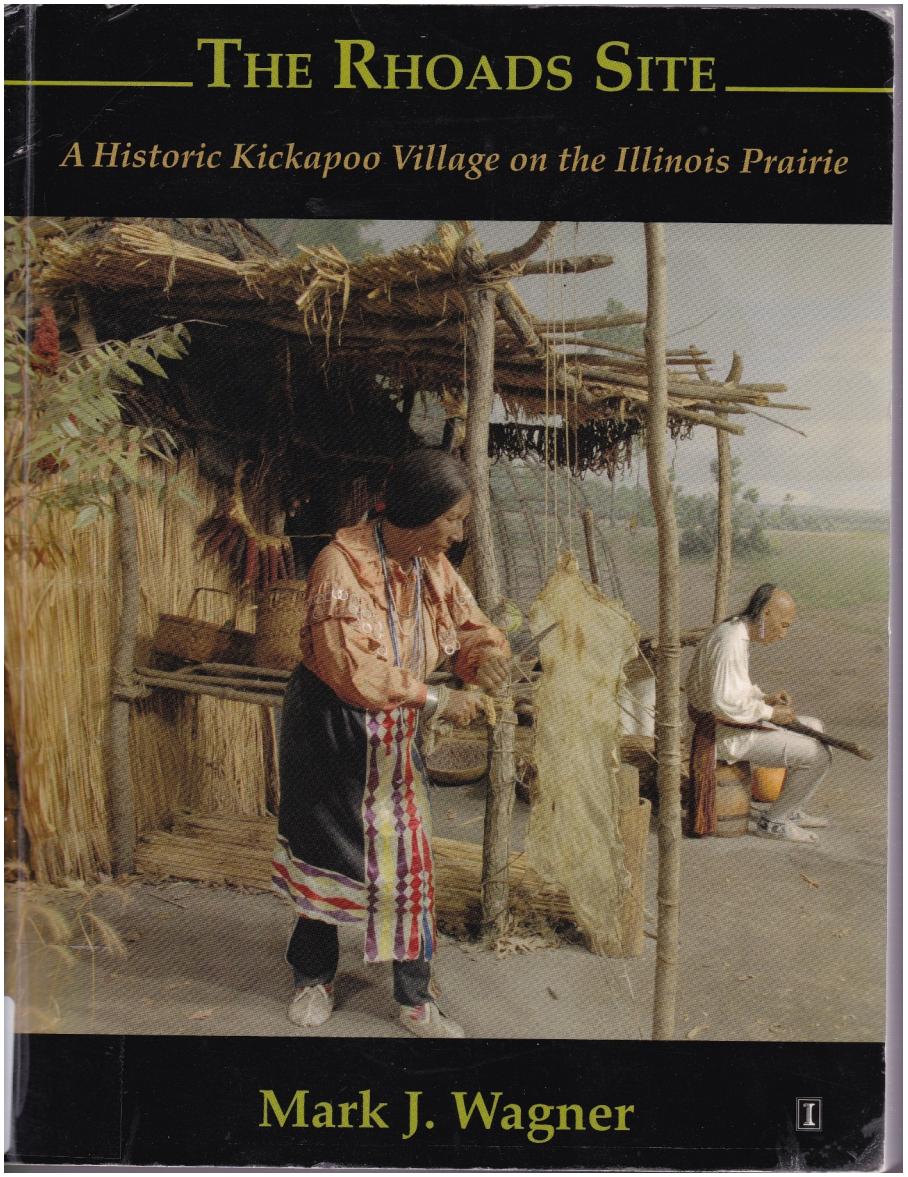
Kickapoo

- First white settlers in Livingston County
  - -Valentine and Rachel Darnall
  - -1830 South of Fairbury
- Kickapoo lived about 5 miles south of Fairbury 1828-1830
- Then moved 10 miles East to Oliver's Grove south of Chatsworth (~650 tribe members) 1830-1832
- 1832 was 5 month long Blackhawk War
- Early settlers went to Indiana, Kickapoo did not participate
- In 1832, we forced the Kickapoo to leave the State of Illinois

Kickapoo History

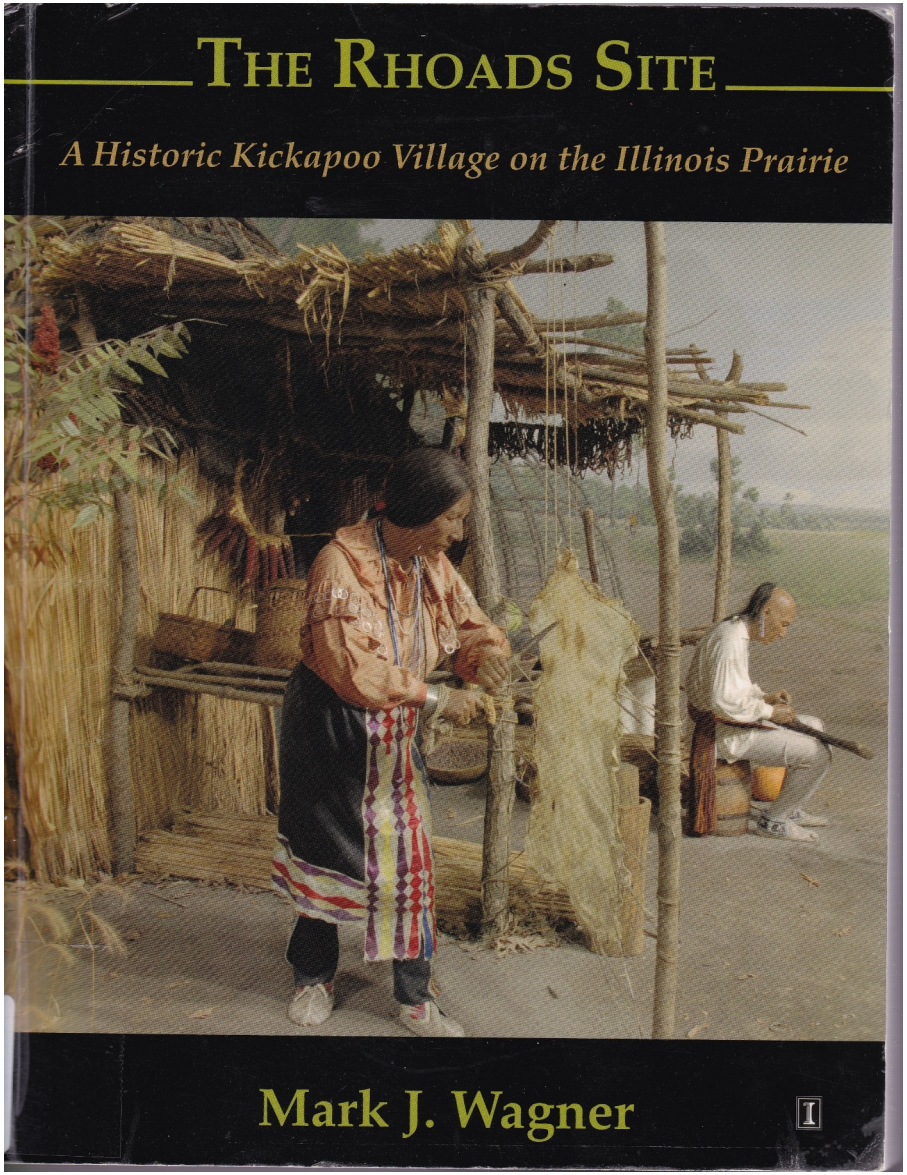
In 2011, Mark J. Wagner wrote a book titled ***The Rhoads Site: A Historic Kickapoo Village on the Illinois Prairie.***

Mr. Wagner's primary focus was to learn more information about a Kickapoo village just east of Lincoln, Illinois, on the Henry Rhoads farm.



Kickapoo History

Mr. Wagner also researched and documented the history of the Kickapoo tribe, going back to the early 1600s and up to 1832, when they were forced to leave Illinois.



Kickapoo History

•Mr. Wagner noted that in the 1600s, the Kickapoo lived in southeast Michigan.

•The tribe then moved to northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin.

•In 1673, French explorers Father Jacques Marquette and Louis **Jolliet** were the first Europeans to visit Illinois.

•They claimed the territory for France and named it Pays des Illinois, or Land of the Illinois.

We could all be speaking French today!

Kickapoo Historv

•Marquette and Jolliet started their trip at St. Ignace, located between Lake Michigan and Lake Huron.

•They traveled by boat westwards across the north shore of Lake Michigan and then entered Wisconsin into Green Bay.

•They proceeded west to the Mississippi River. They went down the Mississippi through St. Louis and down to Arkansas.

•On their return trip, Native Americans suggested they take the Illinois River to Chicago and Lake Michigan.

Kickapoo History

- When the expedition was in southern Wisconsin, one of the Native American tribes they encountered was the Kickapoo.

- This encounter indicated the Kickapoo had moved from southeast Michigan to southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois by 1673.

Kickapoo History

- Another Native American tribe located in southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois was the Fox.

- History books for that era refer to this tribe as the Fox.

- Modern-day descendants of this tribe prefer the name Mesquakie.

- In 1993, authors R. David Edmunds and Joseph L. Peyser published a book titled ***The Fox Wars: The Mesquakie Challenge to New France.***

Kickapoo History

- The authors note that the Fox tribe had disputes in northern Illinois with many other Native American tribes and the French military.

- In 1730, the Fox decided to move away from their enemies and relocated to a site near present-day Arrowsmith, Illinois.

- The Fox built a fort at their new home near Arrowsmith.

- French sketches of the Fort still exist!

Kickapoo History

•Word of the new home of the Fox at Arrowsmith quickly spread to all the enemies of the Fox tribe, including many Native American tribes and the French military.

•These enemies of the Fox, including the Kickapoo, quickly surrounded the Fox fort, and a siege began.

•After a few days of siege, the Fox decided to sneak away from their fort during a massive thunderstorm.

•The French military instructed their Native American allies to wait until the next day to attack the Fox tribe because of too much confusion during the terrific thunderstorm.

Kickapoo History

•When the storm cleared the next day, the Fox had only been able to travel a few miles from their fort during the storm.

•The combined forces of the French military and their Native American allies killed almost all of the 500 men, women, and children in the Fox tribe.

•The Kickapoo participated in what is now known as the **1730 Fox Massacre at Arrowsmith.**

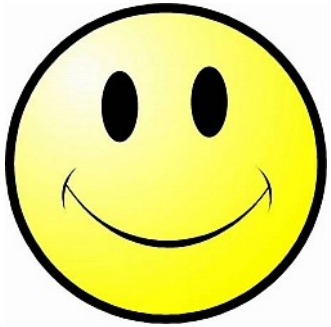
•This story occurred 100 years before the Kickapoo interacted with Valentine and Rachel Darnall south of Fairbury !

Kickapoo History

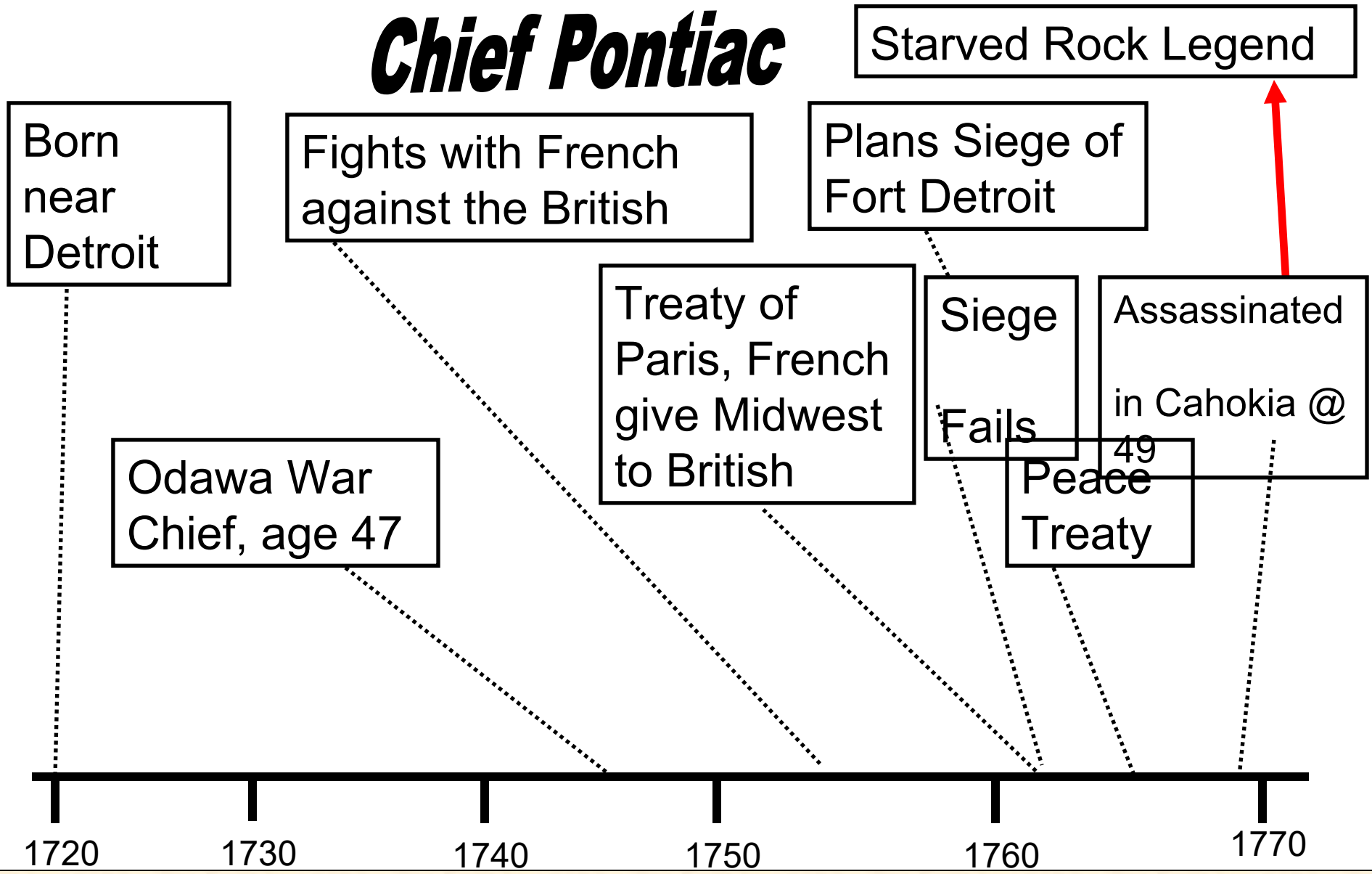
•The French occupied and claimed Illinois as French territory for 90 years, from 1673 until the treaty in 1763.

• Illinois then became a British possession after this treaty was signed.

That is why we don't speak French today



Native Americans in Livingston County



Kickapoo History

•According to legend, in 1769, the Starved Rock Massacre took place near LaSalle, Illinois.

•The legend claims that after a member of the Illiniwek Confederation killed **Chief Pontiac**, several tribes, including the Chippewa, Potawatomi, Ottawa, and Kickapoo, united to seek vengeance against the Illiniwek.

•These Native American tribes starved the Illiniwek tribe to death.

Kickapoo History

•However, it's crucial to understand that the Starved Rock massacre is more of a legend than a verified historical event.

•Recent research has cast significant doubt on whether this massacre actually occurred or not. Very few facts have been found which substantiate this legend.

Kickapoo History

- The 1878 Livingston County history book describes a massive battle between Native American tribes in 1774.

- This battle was the result of a land dispute with the Miami tribe on one side of the conflict and the Kickapoos and Pottawatomies on the other side.

- The two sides agreed to select 300 hundred warriors and fight each other to determine the winner.

Kickapoo History

Image created by Perplexity AI (Artificial Intelligence)

Kickapoo History

•At sunrise, the battle occurred on Sugar Creek's banks (now Bloomington-Normal).

•By the time the sun set that day, only 12 men remained who were not killed or mortally wounded.

•There were five Miamis still alive and seven Kickapoos and Pottawatomies.

•If there were 300 total warriors and only 12 survived, means 288 men killed in the battle !!!

Kickapoo History

•In this battle, the Kickapoos and Pottawatomies were declared the victors.

•The Miami tribe retired to the east side of the Wabash River.

•The Kickapoo and Pottawatomie divided up the land west of the Wabash River.

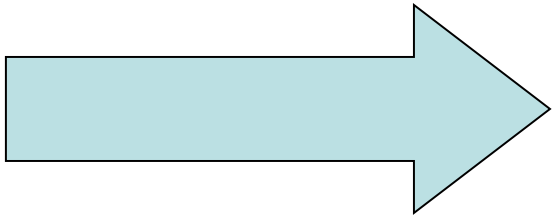
•These two tribes agreed that an Indian trail passing near Oliver's Grove (three miles south of Chatsworth) would be the dividing line for the Illinois land.

•East and southwest of this line belonged to the Kickapoos and the remainder to the Pottawatomies.

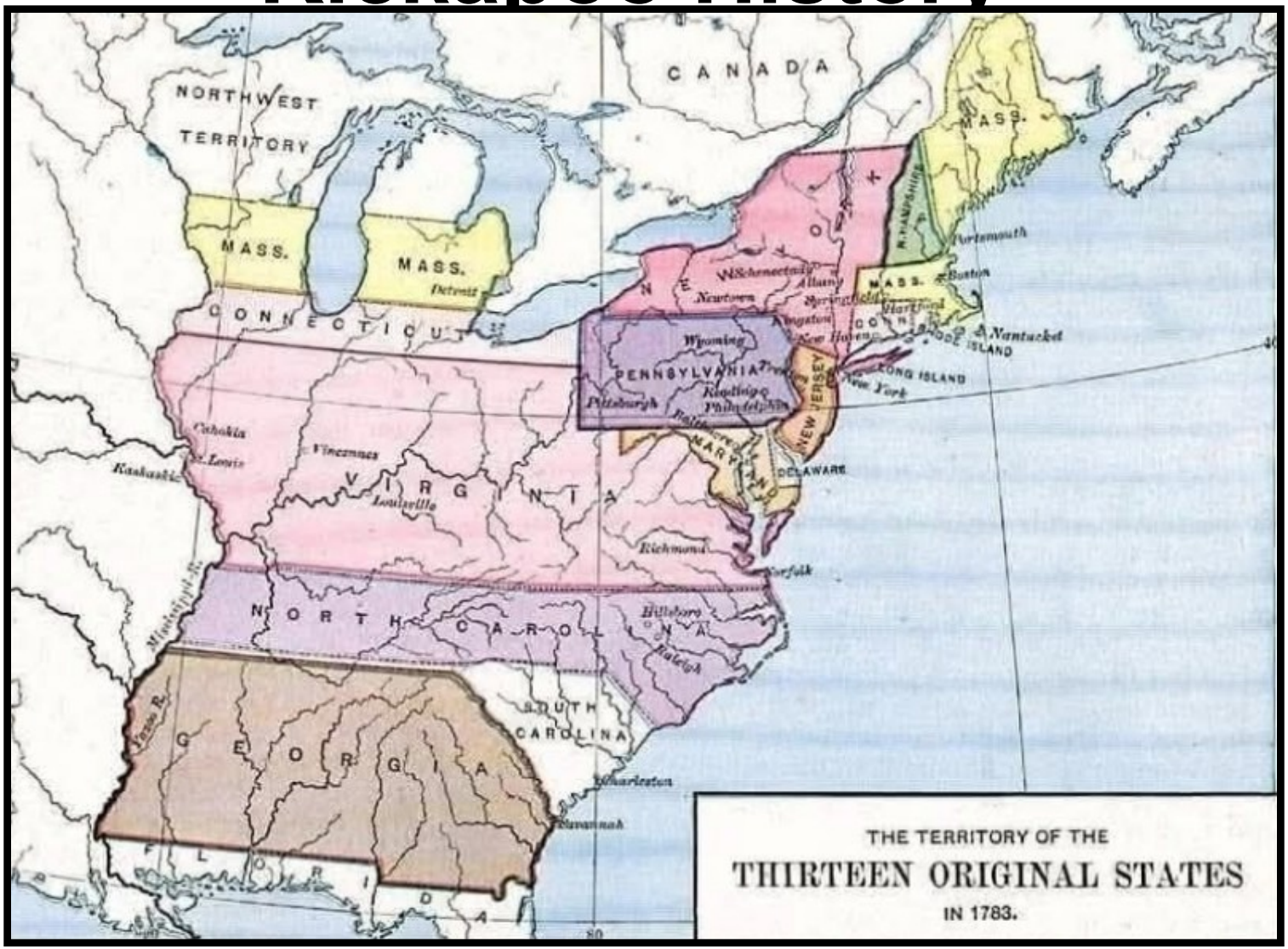
Kickapoo History

•The Treaty of Paris in 1783 ceded the Illinois Country to the United States.

•After the American Revolution ended in 1783, Illinois was technically part of the state of Virginia.



Kickapoo History



Kickapoo History

- One of the few written accounts of how the Kickapoo lived in the 1780s is from William Biggs's in 1788.

- He was captured and held by the Kickapoo tribe for a while until they ransomed him and released him.

- They traveled about 30 miles daily on horseback near the Wabash River southeast of Champaign, Illinois.

- Mr. Biggs wrote a book describing the Kickapoo lifestyle in that era.

- PDF copy of book available from Fairbury Echoes Museum Website => FairburyEchoes.org

Kickapoo History

•When the first surveyor passed through the land near present-day Leroy, Illinois, he noted that between 2,000 and 3,000 Kickapoo lived in their village in 1824.

•This site is now known as the Grand Village of the Kickapoo.

•In 1828, about 650 members of this tribe moved to a location on Indian Creek about seven miles south of present-day Fairbury.

•The Kickapoo stayed at this location for two years.

Kickapoo History

- In 1830, this Kickapoo tribe moved again to Oliver's Grove, about three miles south of present-day Chatsworth.

- In 1832, this tribe was forced to move to Missouri.

- Eventually, portions of the Kickapoo tribe migrated to Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, and Mexico.

- In 2024, a total of about 5,000 Kickapoo live in these three states and Mexico.

- Several tribes maintain web sites.

Kickapoo History

1. The Kickapoo people's migratory path started in southeast Michigan in 1600.

2. By 1673, they had moved to southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois.

3. By 1774, they were living west of the Wabash River in central Illinois. One branch of the tribe lived south of Fairbury and then Chatsworth in the 1828-1832 era.

Kickapoo History

- In 1832, the Kickapoo were forced to leave Illinois and move to Missouri.

- Today, there are about 5,000 descendants of this tribe living in Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, and Mexico.

Fairbury - Kickapoo History

- Terrible Winter of 1830
- Kickapoo gave some native grown beans to Valentine and Rachel Darnall for some food to eat during the winter
- In 2010, Marty Travis grew some of these beans south of Fairbury with seeds given to him by the Kickapoo
- Marty gave some beans grown by him in 2010 to modern day Kickapoo, descended from the same beans the Kickapoo gave their great-great-great-great-grandfather, Valentine Darnall, to help his family survive their first harsh winter in Illinois !!

Fairbury - Kickapoo History

•The following autumn, after the terrible Winter of 1830-1831, the Kickapoo asked Darnall if they could leave their supply of maple sugar with him until the next spring.

•Darnall fulfilled their request and returned the maple sugar to the Kickapoo the following spring.

•Years later, Darnall was asked if he was tempted to eat some of the maple sugar.

•Darnall admitted he was mightily tempted to eat some of the sugar, but he stopped cold when he discovered it was thick with dog hairs.

Fairbury - Kickapoo History

- The story was often recited that Mrs. Darnall once asked an old Chief if he and his tribesmen would kill them if an uprising should occur.

- The old Chief is said to have replied, "Oh yes, but we kill them quickly," meaning that they would not be tortured.

Chatsworth - Kickapoo History

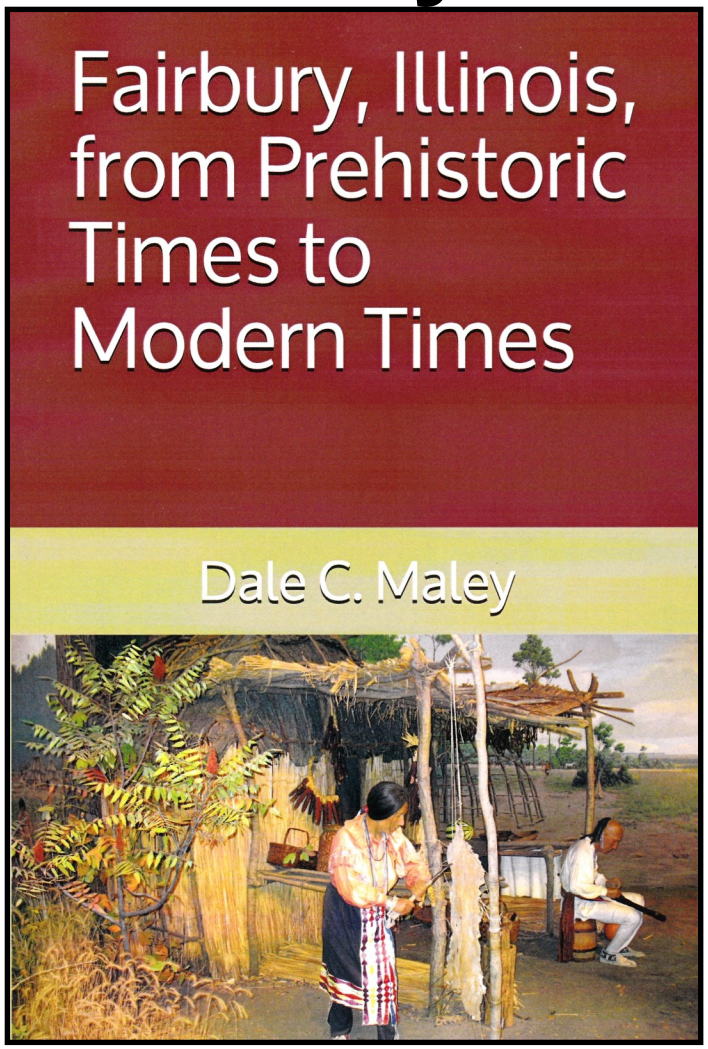
•Franklin Oliver, pioneer settler, accidentally set up camp in the middle of a 650 person Kickapoo tribe

•The Kickapoo Chief asked Oliver to smoke a peace pipe after supper……..and Oliver smoked the peace pipe

•Chief liked Franklin Oliver, told him to stay when Black Hawk War started in 1832, but other settlers should temporarily moved to Indiana, which they did.

•Years later, Franklin Oliver said he normally did not smoke, but smoking the peace pipe with the Chief was one of the best decisions he ever made !!

Fairbury - Kickapoo History



- Much more Native American information
- 240 Pages long
- Native American plants & uses
- William Biggs Kickapoo story
- Fairbury area artifact collectors
- Can borrow from Dominy Library or Pontiac Library.
- Buy copies at Fairbury Furniture in Walton's building, or Amazon.com

Fairbury - Kickapoo History

- Unpublished 418 page manuscript by Fairbury native Bill Goold
- PDF copies available from website of either Fairbury Echoes Museum or Livingston County Historical Society

Closing Thoughts

- As a young man, I only thought of Kickapoo here in the early 1800s

- I did not realize Indigineous People have lived here for 10,000 to 20,000 years……or 400 generations !!!!!

- Since Ice Age ended 10,000 years ago……
  - -Indigenous Peoples have been stewards of our for 9,800 years
  - -European Descendants for last 200 years (1830-2025)

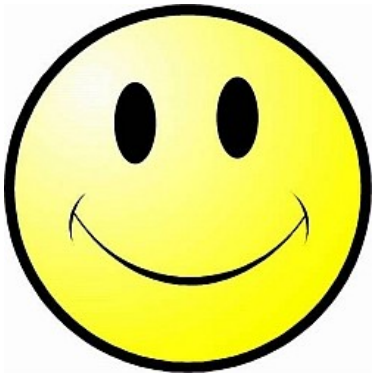
  Means Indigenous Peoples have been stewards of land for 98% of the time and we have been for 2%

Closing Thoughts

•Will eventually convert this presentation to a YouTube video

•Will be able to access through website of Fairbury Echoes Museum or the Historical Society

•Let me know if you would like to become a member of either -
the Fairbury Echoes Museum
-The Livingston County Historical Society



Closing Thoughts

- Can consult the other books I mentioned in the presentation to study further

- Break for refreshments
  - -Roger Kutzner will identify any artifacts you brought during Refreshment Period
  - -Ask Roger any Native American related questions!

Questions?